DC

JACK MILLER & NEAL ADAMS

AUG. 1985
NO. 4

DEADMAN™

I WON'T LET ME YOU KILL AGAIN!

NOT AGAIN, HOOK...

DEADMAN

MURDERED AND DEPRIVED OF HIS RIGHT TO ETERNAL REST...COMPELLED TO WANDER THE EARTH...UNSEEN...UNHEARD...ALLOWED TO WALK AMONG MEN ONLY IN THE BODIES OF OTHERS...**DEADMAN** CONTINUES HIS RELENTLESS SEARCH FOR THE MAN WHO KILLED HIM!

YOU WERE HERE, HOOK, AND YOU GOT AWAY...MAYBE MOMENTS AGO! AGHHH. I CAN ALMOST SMELL **YOU!!**

I'LL FIND YOU AGAIN... KILLER...

AND WHEN I DO, THERE WON'T BE ROOM FOR YOU TO SLIP THROUGH MY FINGERS!

EVEN THOUGH THE "HOOK" GOT AWAY...YOU CLEARED YOURSELF AND PROVED HE FRAMED YOU. MAKE YOU FEEL RELIEVED, HEY RILEY?...

HARD TO SAY--LIEUTENANT. EVERYTHING'S KIND OF FUZZY.

HOW CLOSE TO MY KILLER?

JACK MILLER=SCRIPT
NEAL ADAMS=ART

YOU COPPED OUT ON ME AGAIN, HOOK... BUT THIS TIME YOU LEFT A TRAIL!

I'VE GOT YOU NOW, HOOK-- MY KILLER!

AND I KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU--SUNNY EL CAMPO-- SOUTH OF THE BORDER! HERE I COME, HOOK!

EL CAMPO--A SLEEPY MEXICAN TOWN JUST ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE-- DOESN'T GET MANY VISITORS... BUT TODAY... IT'S GOT ONE TODAY!

WHY, HOOK?... WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THIS DIRTY LITTLE TOWN?

BUT THE NEXT MOMENT DEADMAN FREEZES!

CLEVELAND, CLEVELAND-- MY TWIN BROTHER CLEVE!

HOTEL

THERE ARE SOME THINGS A MAN CAN'T BELIEVE-- WITHOUT GOING CLEAR OUT OF HIS SKULL! THERE ARE SOME THINGS A MAN WON'T LET HIMSELF BELIEVE--EVEN WHEN EVERY BONE AND TISSUE IN HIS BODY SCREAMS, "IT'S TRUE--IT'S TRUE!"

CLEVE--DON'T TELL ME THE HOOK CAME HERE TO SEE YOU--

ARE YOU MIXED UP IN MY KILLING!? IT--CAN'T-- BE--AND YET-- AND YET--

"AND YET... IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY, BUT ACTUALLY IT WAS YEARS BACK, WHEN BOSTON BRAND WAS STILL SHARPENING HIS SKILLS AND HARDENING HIS MUSCLES..."

HI, CLEVE! LONG TIME NO SEE! WHAT BRINGS YOU AROUND?

SOMETHING I GOTTA TALK TO YOU ABOUT, BOSTON... IT'S REAL IMPORTANT TO ME...

TAKE ME INTO YOUR ACT, BOSTON! IT'S-- IT'S SOME HING I'VE WANTED TO DO--ALL MY LIFE, BOSTON!

CLEVELAND..! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! YOU DON'T HAVE THE COORDINATION--IT TAKES YEARS OF PRACTICE!

OKAY, OKAY! ***YOU*** ALWAYS HAD TO BE THE BIG SHOT!

NOW WAIT A MINUTE, CLEVELAND--THAT'S ***NOT*** THE WAY IT IS! YOU'RE NOT BEING FAIR!

FAIR? HA!! I'LL TELL YOU, SOME-THIN', BOSTON--

WHEN WE WERE KIDS-- I ***HATED*** YOU! I--I KEPT HOPING YOU'D ***DIE***--

AND FOR ALL I CARE, YOU CAN STILL CROAK!

B-BUT CLEVELAND WAS JUST CRYING HIS HEART OUT... SAYING THINGS HE PROBABLY RE-GRETTED 10 MINUTES LATER--

H-HE'S--***SOB***-- GOT HIMSELF MIXED UP WITH SOME GANG-- AND NOW--NOW HE'S IN TROUBLE WITH THEM--

--HE'S EVEN AFRAID TO LEAVE HIS HOUSE--

--THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE'D COME AROUND AND--AND PULL THE TRIGGER ON ME-- HE WOULDN'T DO ***THAT***--

"...AND THERE WAS THAT OTHER TIME..."

MOM--DON'T WORRY-- I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT!

A COUPLE OF BRUISERS WERE WAITING DOWN THE BLOCK...

YOU HATCHETMEN WAITING FOR SOMEONE?

YEAH, CLEVE! WE GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU!

CHOK

YOU GOT THE WRONG BRAND... BUT SINCE WE BRANDS ALWAYS GIVE SOMETHING IN RETURN...

BOY, ARE YOU GUYS OVERPAID!

NOW FOR A HEART-TO-HEART TALK WITH CLEVELAND!

BOSTON DIDN'T EXPECT ANY GRATITUDE FROM HIS BROTHER-- SO HE WASN'T EXACTLY DIS-APPOINTED...

THAT'S WHY YOU CAME AROUND, AIN'T IT, BOSTON--TO SHOW WHAT A ***BIG MAN*** YOU ARE COMPARED TO ME!

WHAT KIND OF A NUT ARE YOU, CLEVE? MAN... YOU THINK ***THAT'S*** ALL I GOT TO THINK ABOUT-- SHOWING ***YOU*** UP?

LAST WARNING, CLEVE...

...STRAIGHTEN OUT AND FLY RIGHT...

...OR I'LL NEVER LET YOU FORGET IT!

DON'T WORRY, BOSTON-- I ***WON'T*** FORGET--I'LL NEVER FORGET THIS!

BUT THAT WAS NO REASON TO GET ME-- NO! YOU WERE ONLY SHOOTING OFF YOUR MOUTH, WEREN'T YOU, CLEVE?

AND THAT WAS THE LAST TIME BOSTON HAD SEEN CLEVELAND, UNTIL...

ANY BUSINESS, LITA?

NOTHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT, DAD!

YOU GOT A LOVELY DAUGHTER, CLEVE!

LISTEN, DAD--NOW THAT MOTHER'S GONE, CAN'T WE MOVE BACK TO THE STATES, LIKE YOU PROMISED?

er--SURE, HONEY--SOON AS I FINISH UP SOME BUSINESS!

WHAT BUSINESS, DAD? AND WHERE ARE YOU MAKING ALL THE MONEY? NOT FROM THIS HOTEL, I KNOW!

HA, HA! I WAS JUST THINKING-- IF BOSTON WERE ALIVE, HE'D BE SURPRISED AT HOW *MUCH* DOUGH I'VE GOT!

OH, HONEY--SORRY-- BUT SOMETHING'S COME UP --

--I'LL--er--HAVE TO TAKE OFF AGAIN TONIGHT--

OH, DAD-- NOT AGAIN!

SORRY, LITA-- BUT IT CAN'T BE HELPED! I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW DAYS!

YOU SPEND MORE TIME AWAY FROM THE HOTEL THESE DAYS THAN IN IT!

OH, JOSE, I WISH I HAD SOME-ONE TO TELL MY TROUBLES TO--SOME-ONE TO CONFIDE IN--

YOU ***HAVE***, LITA--EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T KNOW IT!

I'LL FIND OUT WHERE HE'S GOING, HONEY!

LOOKS LIKE ***I'M*** NOT THE ***ONLY*** PASSENGER GETTING A FREE RIDE!

BUT WHERE ARE WE HEADING, CLEVE?

ESTA AQUI' ESTEBAN MIRA!

THE JOURNEY ENDS ON THE BANKS OF THE RIO GRANDE, WHERE...

TAKE IT EASY, YOU GUYS-- WE AIN'T LEAVING BEFORE DARK ANYWAY--

--AND THERE'S PLENTY OF ROOM FOR EVERYBODY!

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, BROTHER O'MINE--?

WHY ARE YOU SMUGGLING THOSE MEXICANS ACROSS THE BORDER INTO THE U.S.?

AND NOW, LET'S CHANGE THE SCENE --TO A CIVIC COMMUNITY DINNER IN A MEDIUM-SIZED CITY IN TEXAS, U.S.A. ...

--AND IT'S MY HONOR AND MY PRIVILEGE TO STAND HERE AND AFFIRM TO ALL YOU GOOD FOLKS THAT IT'S THE LABORING PEOPLE--THE HARD-WORKING POOR PEOPLE--THAT BUILT OUR GREAT AND GLORIOUS NATION...

...AND IT'S OUR PRIVILEGE, AS THEIR CHOSEN LEADERS, TO GIVE 'EM EVERY BREAK WE CAN! THANK YOU, FOLKS!

GREAT SPEECH, ALF!

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!

AS ALF JACKSON LEAVES, THE APPLAUSE STILL RINGING IN HIS EARS...

BACK TO THE RANCH, PETE!

YES, SIR!

THE ALFIE JACKSON RANCH--ONE OF THE BIGGEST IN THE STATE--IS 90 MILES AWAY--AND JACKSON ARRIVES EXACTLY ONE HOUR LATER...

SOMEONE TO SEE YOU, SIR!

HOW-DO, MR. JACKSON!

HELLO, CLEVE! DID YOU BRING THE-- ER-- **MERCHANDISE?**

YES, SIR, MR. JACKSON, YES, SIR!

WHAT'S GOING ON, CLEVE?

AND BEFORE LONG, **DEADMAN** IS WITNESS TO A SINISTER SCENE...

GOOD WORK, CLEVE! THERE'S AN EXTRA LITTLE BONUS FOR YOU HERE!

SO **THIS** IS WHAT YOU'RE UP TO, BROTHER-- A **WETBACK OPERATION** -- ILLEGALLY SMUGGLING MEXICANS INTO THE U.S. FOR CHEAP LABOR!

KEEP 'EM WORKIN' BUT REMEMBER, YOU GOTTA GET 'EM OUTTA HERE BEFORE DAWN!

BUT AT THAT MOMENT...

IT'S ORRY KANE! SOMETHING'S WRONG!

BAD NEWS, MR. JACKSON! THE COPS HAVE BEEN TIPPED OFF ABOUT THE WETBACKS! THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY HERE--

QUICK, CLEVE-- GET 'EM OUTTA HERE!

IT AIN'T GONNA BE THAT EASY, MR. JACKSON!

COPS CONTACTED THE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES-- AND **THEY'LL** BE WAITING ON THE OTHER SIDE!

WHAT?!?

IF--IF THOSE STINKIN' WETBACKS ARE TAKEN PRISONER, THEY'LL SPILL THE BEANS!

I'M A BIG MAN AROUND HERE! MY REPUTATION WILL BE RUINED!

NO, CLEVE-- **NO!!**

LISTEN, CLEVE--AND LISTEN GOOD! WHEN-- WHEN YOU REACH THE MIDDLE OF THE RIO GRANDE, YOU UNLOAD!--

--UNDERSTAND! I DON'T WANT ANY WITNESSES TO PIN THIS ON ME, UNDERSTAND!

YES, MR. JACKSON!

A SILENT CRY OF DESPAIR NOW CHOKES ***DEADMAN*** AS HE HELPLESSLY WATCHES HIS BROTHER LUMBER TO HIS GRIM MISSION..

NO, CLEVE, NO-- YOU'RE NO KILLER-- YOU ***CAN'T*** BE--YOU'RE BITTER-- MAYBE YOU GOT A RIGHT TO BE, I DON'T KNOW...

BUT I DO KNOW MY BROTHER IS NOT A ***MASS MURDERER!***

THERE IS A COLDNESS FAR WORSE THAN THE COLDNESS OF DEATH--THE KIND OF COLDNESS THAT ENCASES THE GREAT HEART OF ***DEADMAN,*** AS HE NUMBLY FOLLOWS HIS BROTHER UNTIL...

DON'T FORGET, CLEVE--YOU GOTTA GET RID OF EVERY LAST ONE OF 'EM! MR. JACKSON'S STRICT ORDERS!

YEAH, YEAH-- I HEARD!

SURE, SURE--BUT A FAT LOT ***YOU*** CARE, CLEVE, YOU COLD-BLOODED KILLER!... NOW--NOW--I ***KNOW*** YOU'RE TIED UP WITH ***THE HOOK, MY KILLER!***

LOOK AT 'EM--HAPPY AND LAUGHING! IF--IF THEY ONLY KNEW THEY HAD MINUTES LEFT TO LIVE!

THERE ARE TWO UNKNOWN AND UNSEEN PASSENGERS ABOARD THE DOOMED VESSEL--ONE IS ***DEADMAN***--THE OTHER IS ***DEATH!***

AND IF YOU CAN'T KILL A STRANGER, YOU COULDN'T DO IT TO YOUR OWN BROTHER, COULD YOU, BABY?!

I--I CAN'T DO IT, ORRY! I CAN'T KILL A WHOLE BOATLOAD OF INNOCENT PEOPLE!

I--COULDN'T--KILL-- ANYONE!

OH, CLEVE, CLEVE--I'D GIVEN MY ***LIFE*** TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT, IF I ***HAD*** A LIFE TO GIVE!

LISTEN HERE, CLEVE--

--YOU GOT ORDERS--AND YOU'LL CARRY 'EM OUT! UNDERSTAND?

TOO BAD FOR **YOU**, THEN-- 'CAUSE **I** GOT MY ORDERS, TOO-- TO TAKE CARE OF YOU IF YOU CHICKEN OUT!

B-BUT I TELL YOU, I **CAN'T!** **I CAN'T KILL ANYONE!!**

HANG ON, CLEVE-- I'M COMIN'!

YOU'D BE A LOT BETTER OFF IF **I** TOOK OVER, KIDDO!

IT IS A "BRAND-NEW" CLEVELAND WHO NOW GOES TO WORK...

WHAMP

--NOW IT'S **MY** CHANCE!

OKAY, BUDDY-- YOU'VE HAD **YOUR** CHANCE--

OOF!

SPOK

LISTEN, FRIENDS--I'M TURNING THIS WHOLE SHEBANG OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES--

BUT DON'T WORRY-- THEY'LL LET YOU GO AFTER A WARNING!

SPLASH

I'M ASKING YOU TO DO JUST *ONE* THING--SPILL THE BEANS ABOUT THAT HYPOCRITE JACKSON WHO'S REALLY BEHIND THIS WHOLE RACKET! OKAY, PALS?

SI, SI! WE TELL!

JUST THEN...

SEÑOR! WATCH OUT! ANOTHER JACKSON KILLER!

BUT THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE!

SPLAT

GASP! CAN'T BREATHE--! GULP!

MY CHEST IS ON FIRE!

I'M--DONE--FOR--

SORRY, CLEVE-- I DIDN'T MEAN TO DO THIS TO YOU--!

BUT AT THIS CRUCIAL MOMENT, FATE TAKES A HAND...

GULP!!

NEED AIR-- AIR-- AIR--!

THEN...

H-HURRY! PULL THAT LINE...!

YOU'RE A FOOL, BRAND... AND IN A SECOND YOU'LL BE A *DEAD* FOOL!

BLAM

SPLOOSH

HE MISSED!... AT THIS RANGE... HOW... ?

KRANG

LIKE THE CLICK OF A CAMERA SHUTTER, ***DEADMAN'S*** EYE REGISTERS THE SCENE THAT SAVED THE LIFE OF HIS BROTHER, CLEVE...

PULL THAT LINE UP! THERE'S A MAN AT THE END OF IT! ***HURRY!***

HURRY! ***HURRY!*** FASTER!

OKAY, GUYS-- LET'S GO HOME...

FOR ONCE THERE IS AN AIR OF GAIETY ABOUT THE RAMSHACKLE EL CAMPO HOTEL WHEN CLEVELAND BRAND COMES HOME...

OH, DADDY-- I'M SO PROUD OF YOU!

BIG HERO!

I--I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME, HONEY-- SO MUCH OF WHAT HAPPENED IS A BLANK--

HUH! I--er--GUESS I **AM** A SORT OF HERO NOW, eh, LITA?... BOY, IF ONLY MY BROTHER BOSTON COULD SEE ME NOW! B-BUT HE CAN'T!

YOU'D BE SURPRISED, CLEVE!

BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, HOOK? WHERE-- ARE--YOU-- KILLER?

NOT ALL SERVANT PROBLEMS ARE THE SAME. SOME SERVANTS ARE SLOPPY, SOME ARE CLOCK WATCHERS, SOME ARE INCOMPETENT AND DISOBEDIENT... BUT THIS PARTICULAR STORY IS ABOUT TWO VERY COOPERATIVE SERVANTS, COOPERATIVE ---

"ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY!"

SCRIPT-SERGIO ARAGONES & NEAL ADAMS
ART-NEAL ADAMS

JONAS SENTRY WAS VERY RICH...

AND OLD... VERY OLD...

HIS TIME WAS SPENT IN DREAMS OF YOUTH AND PAST GLORIES. BUT THESE WERE ONLY DREAMS.

WHAT JONAS SENTRY WANTED MOST WAS HIS BUTLER'S YOUTH TO MAKE HIS DREAMS A REALITY ONCE MORE...

AND THE LOVE OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL LIKE MARIA, HIS CHAMBERMAID, TO TURN HIS HOPES INTO GLORIES ONCE MORE...

I'VE GATHERED ALL THIS GREAT WEALTH INTO ONE GREAT BIG PILE, AND HERE I SIT, LIKE A BROKEN PUMP RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF IT ALL, WAITING TO RUST AWAY.

IT'S ALL ***WASTED***, WITHOUT ***YOUTH!***

WASTED!

WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE FOR A YOUTHFUL BODY! LIKE FAUST, I WOULD STRIKE A BARGAIN WITH THE DEVIL HIMSELF.

MY SOUL FOR...

...MY BODY, MASTER SENTRY?

...***HEH***...

YOUR PARDON, MASTER... I COULD NOT HELP BUT OVERHEAR YOUR...ER, PROPOSITION!?

ANY TIME YOU CHOOSE, YOUR SOUL CAN PURCHASE MY STRENGTH... MY YOUTH ...MY...

LOUT... YOU CHOOSE TO ***MOCK*** AN OLD MAN. KEEP YOUR FOUL SARCASM TO YOURSELF UNLESS YOU WISH TO FIND YOURSELF OUT OF A JOB.

AN OFFER LIKE THIS COMES ONCE IN A LIFETIME, MASTER SENTRY!... AND YOUR LIFE IS RAPIDLY DRAWING TO A CLOSE. CONSIDER WELL MY OFFER!

I SHOULD... FIRE... HIM...

THE DAYS PASSED AND MARIA SEEMED MORE ATTENTIVE THAN EVER BEFORE.

YOUR TEA, MASTER SENTRY. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE?

YOU'VE DONE SO MANY FANTASTIC THINGS IN YOUR LIFETIME, MASTER SENTRY... HOW THE GIRLS MUST HAVE FLOCKED AROUND WHEN YOU WERE A YOUNG MAN.

OH, MARIA...

SHE COULD BE YOURS...WITH MY BODY AND YOUR MONEY, YOU COULD HAVE ANYTHING... OR *ANYONE!* DON'T BE A FOOL!!

FINALLY IN DESPERATION, JONAS CALLED MARIA TO HIM...

YES SIR?

MARIA...LISTEN ...LISTEN CAREFULLY TO WHAT I'M ABOUT TO ASK YOU.

AND AS HE HAD DONE MANY TIMES BEFORE, HE ASKED MARIA TO MARRY HIM.

BE MINE, AND ALL OF THIS WILL BE YOURS... JUST SAY YES!

I CAN'T... JONAS. THINK OF THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR AGES.

OH JONAS... I'M SORRY. BUT IF YOU WERE YOUNG... LIKE PETER, I'D MARRY YOU IN AN INSTANT. YOU WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE TO ASK.

PETER, STOP! WAIT... I-I'VE CHANGED MY MIND. I'LL ACCEPT YOUR OFFER. IF YOU CAN GIVE ME YOUR YOUTH, YOU CAN HAVE ANYTHING! ...*ANYTHING!*

VERY WELL, YOU KNOW MY PRICE. *LET THE DEED BE DONE!*

HURRY! GIVE IT TO ME! *HURRY!*

YOU'VE DONE IT. IT'S REALLY ME... IN *YOUR* BODY. I'M *YOUNG* AGAIN.

MY OLD BODY. *HA! HA!* USELESS OLD HUSK! *HA-HA!* WHO NEEDS YOU! *HA! HA! HA!*

THUMP THUMP

I HAVE EVERYTHING NOW... *YOUTH*... *MONEY*... AND NOW *YOU,* MY LOVE! *HA! HA! HA!*

SNICK TIKKA TIKKA SNICK TIKKA TIKKA CLICK

HELLO...IS THIS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT?... YES... I'D LIKE TO REPORT A VERY SERIOUS CRIME. JONAS SENTRY HAS BEEN MURDERED!

HUH

YES... YES... HIS BUTLER KILLED HIM!...PUSHED HIM DOWN A FLIGHT OF STAIRS!

WHAT?

MARIA, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT? DON'T LEAVE!

WAIT!

THIS IS A MISTAKE--A TERRIBLE MISTAKE! THIS ISN'T THE REAL ME! I CHANGED BODIES... ASK MY BUTLER... NO... NO! I DIDN'T KILL ANYONE! LET ME GO!

SHORT MONTHS LATER...
THIS COURT SENTENCES YOU TO LIFE IN PRISON!..
LIFE... IN PRISON?
LIFE... IN PRISON!!
HA... HA... HA HA HA HA...
POOR DEVIL!

HAVEN'T FOUND ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN YOU AND THIS "HOOK," CLEVE!

AND THE HOOK IS WHY I CAME TO EL CAMPO! SEE YOU, CLEVE! DON'T DO ANYTHING I WOULDN'T DO!

AND THIS TIME,

DEADMAN

YOU'RE CLOSER THAN EVER TO YOUR KILLER, AREN'T YOU? YOU'RE SURE HE'S IN THIS LITTLE TOWN! HOW SOON WILL YOU MAKE HIM HEAR...

The FATAL CALL OF VENGEANCE

IT WAS NICE OF THE CIRCUS TO SEND YOUR BROTHER'S THINGS TO YOU, DAD!

DO YOU THINK WE'LL EVER GO BACK TO THE STATES AND VISIT BOSTON'S OLD FRIENDS?

I WAS MEANING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THAT, HONEY! OUR PLANE RESERVATIONS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED FOR TOMORROW. YOU'D BETTER GET YOURSELF PACKED!

NEAL ADAMS SCRIPT AND ART

OH, DADDY! WE'RE GOING HOME! WHAT A WONDERFUL SURPRISE!

YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I LIKE SURPRISES, LITA! A HABIT I PICKED UP FROM MY BROTHER!

TWO DAYS LATER, **LORNA HILL**, OWNER OF **HILL'S CIRCUS**, HAS A VISITOR ... WHO LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE THE LATE BOSTON BRAND!

HI! ANYBODY AROUND HERE KNOW ME?

BOSTON! ... IT CAN'T BE! IT... YOU'RE...

OHHHHHH...

OF COURSE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON BACK AT THE CIRCUS, DEADMAN! YOU'RE STILL IN EL CAMPO SEARCHING FOR "THE HOOK"... UNTIL NOW, YOUR SEARCH HAS BEEN FUTILE... BUT NOW YOUR DISCARNATE EAR HEARS... IN THE BACKGROUND...

EEF YOU MUST KNOW, **TOURISTA**! I GOT THEES BLACKENED EYE FROM A COUNTRYMAN OF YOURS THEES MORNING! HE HIT ME WEETH HEES **HOOK**!

A MAN WITH... A HOOK! SOMETHING TO HOLD ON TO! CAN'T LET THAT CONVERSATION END, CAN YOU? NOW, YOU MUST ENTER THE LITTLE MAN'S BODY...

AH... WHY SHOULD THIS HOOK FELLOW WISH TO STRIKE YOU?

AHH... CRAZY GRINGO! I JUS' TOOK HEES MORNING PAPER FROM HEEM... YOU KNOW... KIDDING LIKE... AND HE WENT WILD! I THEENK SOME-THING IN THE PAPER BUG HEEM!

... WH... WHEN HE FINISHED READING THE PAPER, WHAT DID THIS "HOOK" DO?

TRAPEZE ARTIST FAMED AERIALST ALIVE

DEADMAN... VICTIM OF SNIPER'S BULLET SAYS REPORTS OF HIS DEATH... EXAGGERATED

PERO... HE GOT IN A CAB AND HEADED OUT TOWARD THE AIRPORT!

HEY... HOW COME YOU WANT TO KNOW? HE MEAN SOMETHING TO YOU? MAYBE YOU'RE A COP... HUH!

HEY, GRINGO! ANSWER ME! YOU A COP OR SOMETHING? ... POLICIA?... EH?

HUH? WHAT'S THAT?... POLICE? YES... NO! IT'S ALL RIGHT, I'M JUST A LITTLE DIZZY... NO NEED FOR THE POLICE!

GOT TO GET TO THE CIRCUS AND SEE WHO'S IMPERSONATING ME...

UH...OH!

DON'T LIE TO ME, *GRINGO COP!* I TAKE ENOUGH FROM YOU GRINGOS TODAY... NOW I GIVE A LITTLE!

UH!

THE SNEAKY GRINGO, GET HEEM!

I HAVE THE STRANGEST FEELING THAT I'M IN THE WRONG BODY FOR THIS KIND OF STUFF!

KARASHH!

CRACK

WHUMP

BRONK

THEY'RE ALL YOURS, CHUM!

GOOD HEAVENS, DID I DO ALL THAT? MY, MY!

NOW YOU HEAD BACK TO THE CIRCUS, DRIVING YOURSELF TOWARD YOUR GOAL AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT... EXCEPT YOU NO LONGER HAVE A **LIFE** TO FIGHT FOR! YOU'RE FIGHTING FOR THE END OF YOUR TORMENT AND PERHAPS **SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE!** **HURRY,** DEADMAN, **HURRY!**

THERE IT IS... THE CIRCUS... SOMEBODY DOWN THERE IS IMPERSONATING ME... AND FOR SOME REASON LORNA AND EVERYONE ELSE HAS GONE ALONG WITH HIM! LET'S SEE... WHERE WOULD HE BE?

OF COURSE! **MY OLD TENT!**

CLEVELAND... **YOU!!** WHAT THE DEVIL'S GOING ON HERE?

I'M BEGINNING TO HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS, CLEVELAND! IF BOSTON'S KILLER WAS SMART ENOUGH TO ESCAPE AFTER THE MURDER, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO STOP HIM THIS TIME?

BECAUSE **WE'RE** READY FOR HIM THIS TIME, AND, ANYWAY, THIS IS SOMETHING I **HAVE** TO DO! YOU WON'T UNDERSTAND, BUT I WAS NEVER ABLE TO TELL MY BROTHER HOW MUCH I THOUGHT OF HIM! HE DID SO MUCH FOR ME AND I NEVER FOUND A WAY TO THANK HIM...

THIS IS MY WAY... THE ONLY WAY I HAVE LEFT... NOW THAT HE'S DEAD!

NO, CLEVE! NOT THIS WAY! I DON'T WANT YOUR HEAD ON THE SAME BLOCK THAT MINE WAS ON!

I'M GOING TO TAKE A WALK AROUND THE GROUNDS NOW AND SEE IF I CAN TURN UP ANYTHING!

I'D BETTER STAY WITH HIM UNTIL I CAN THINK OF SOME WAY TO MAKE HIM GIVE UP THIS STUPID STUNT!

GOOD MORNING, VASHNU! ANALYZE ANY INTERESTING CHARACTERS LATELY?

NOTHING SO INTERESTING AS THE NIGHT BEFORE YOU WERE SHOT, CHILD OF RAMA KUSHNA!

HELLO, MR. BRAND, MAY I SPEAK TO YOU A MOMENT?

WILL YOU BE PERFORMING YOUR ACT AGAIN SOON, MR. BRAND?

NO... NOT FOR QUITE A WHILE! I WON'T BE ABLE TO BEGIN TRAINING FOR ANOTHER MONTH, DOCTOR'S ORDERS... MY WOUND WAS VERY SERIOUS!

I SEE... MR. BRAND! THANK YOU!

THEY'RE NOT FOOLING VASHNU, ARE THEY DEADMAN? HE KNOWS IT'S NOT YOU...HE AND HIS ALL-PERVADING RAMA KUSHNA!

BUT WAIT... WHAT'S THAT SOUND INTRUDING UPON YOUR THOUGHTS, DEADMAN? THE LIONS, PERHAPS...?

BLAST THOSE LIONS, WHY ARE THEY MAKING SUCH A RACKET?

THE NEW LION TAMER SEEMS TO PUT EXCESS EFFORT INTO HIS WORK! PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE THAT HE DOES NOT DO ANY DAMAGE TO THE ANIMALS?

HUH... YEH... SURE!

KLEIGMAN! WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU DOING? WHY ARE YOU USING THAT PROD ON THE LIONS?

THIS IS MY ACT, BRAND... WHAT I DO WITH THE CATS IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!

ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS AROUND THIS CIRCUS *IS* MY BUSINESS! THOSE CATS BELONG TO THE *CIRCUS*... NOT TO YOU! NOW KNOCK IT OFF, OR...

AT'A BOY! SIC 'EM!

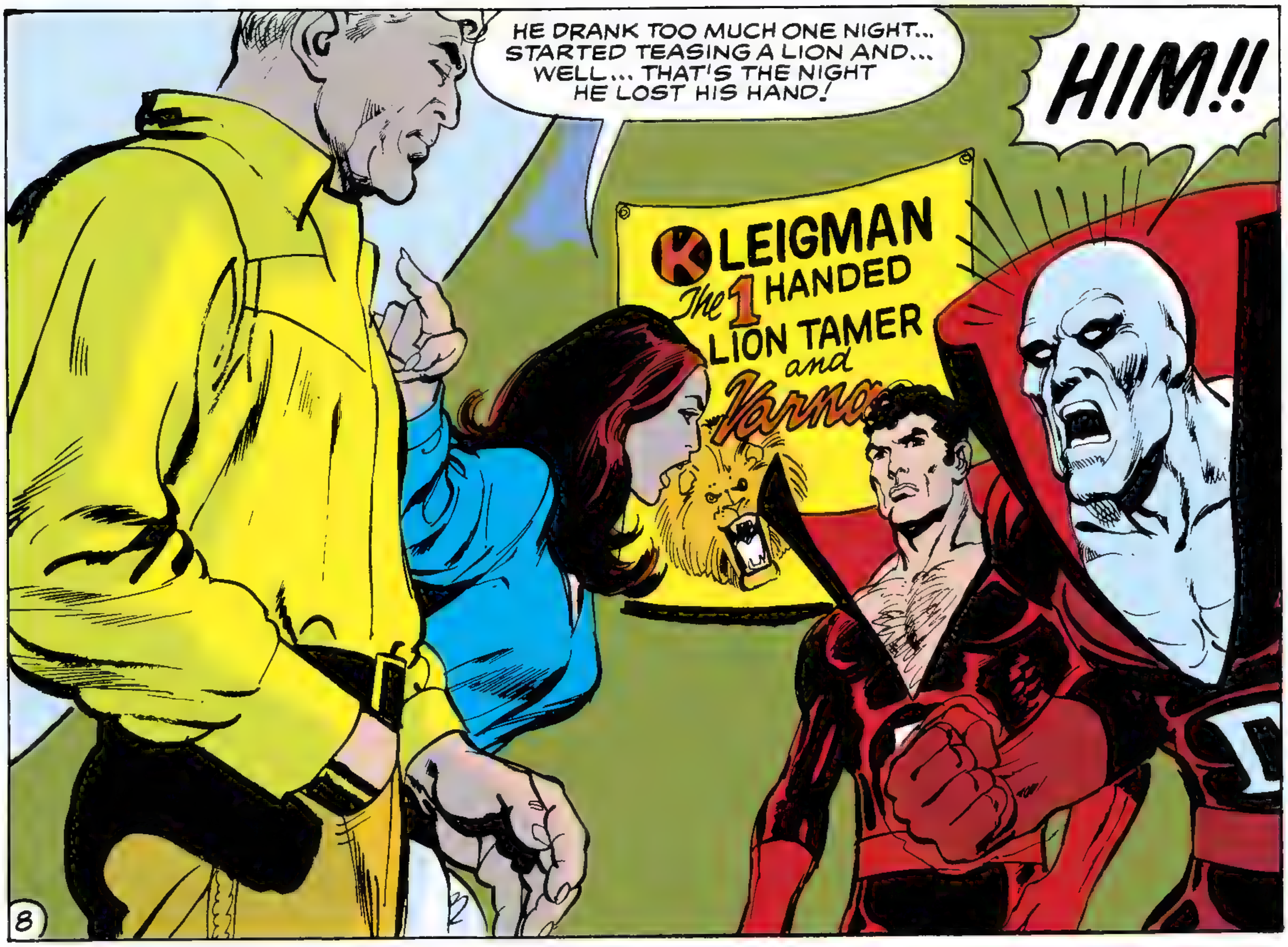
ALL RIGHT, COOL IT, FRIEND! I DO THIS TO GET THE CATS WORKED UP! MAKES FOR A BETTER SHOW!

THEY ACT MEANER AND THERE IS NO REAL HARM DONE!

THAT'S NOT TRUE!

VARNA! BUTT OUT'A THIS!

NO! THIS HAS GONE TOO FAR... HE TORMENTS THE CATS BECAUSE HE *ENJOYS* IT! HE *HATES* THE CATS... *HE HAS FOR TWO YEARS!*


HE DRANK TOO MUCH ONE NIGHT... STARTED TEASING A LION AND... WELL... THAT'S THE NIGHT HE LOST HIS HAND!
HIM!!
KLEIGMAN
The 1 HANDED
LION TAMER
and
Varna
8

ALL RIGHT, KLEIGMAN, WE'LL DROP THE SUBJECT... FOR NOW, I WANT YOU TO MEET ME IN MISS LORNA'S TENT AFTER THE SHOW THIS EVENING! THEN WE'LL HAVE THIS OUT!

CLEVE, NO!... FIND OUT WHERE HE WAS A FEW DAYS AGO! *WAS HE IN MEXICO? HE COULD BE THE HOOK! HE COULD BE MY KILLER!*

NOW YOU'D BETTER GET THOSE ANIMALS CALMED DOWN FOR THE PARADE! I'LL BE IN MY TENT... MAKING UP!

YOU SHOULDN'T OUGHTA DO THIS, MR. BRAND! BOSTON WOULDN'T'A LIKED IT! HE'D WANT FOR YOU TO BE WATCHING AFTER YOUR LITTLE GIRL!

AN HOUR LATER WHILE YOU'RE WATCHING YOUR BROTHER PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO HIS MAKEUP, DEADMAN, A PHONE CONVERSATION IS TAKING PLACE! BUT YOU'RE TOO FAR AWAY TO HEAR IT... TOO BAD!

THEY'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH YOU'VE BEEN TAPPING THE TILL TO PAY OFF YOUR GAMBLING DEBTS! YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO PASS UP MY OFFER! IF YOU DO AS YOU'RE TOLD, I'LL BAIL YOU OUT WITH THE DOUGH THAT YOU NEED!

DON'T WORRY! YOU'LL BE IN THE CLEAR ... FEED THE LION THAT CAPSULE AND SET IT UP LIKE I TOLD YOU!

EXCUSE ME, MR. BRAND! THERE'S SOME KIND OF TROUBLE IN THE ANIMAL TENT!

WHAT NOW?

ANIMAL TENT? ...AHH... I'M GETTING TOO JUMPY!

HELLO...KLEIGMAN ...ANYONE HERE?...

THIS IS BEGINNING TO SMELL LIKE A SET-UP!

HEY!! WHAT'S GOING ON?!

KNEW IT! SOMEONE MOVED THE CAGE JUST INSIDE THE TENT FLAP... AND NOW BROTHER CLEVE IS TRAPPED!

KRANG

WATCH YOUR BROTHER, DEADMAN, AS HIS EYES ACCLIMATE TO THE DARK! WATCH AS THEY WIDEN IN TERROR WHEN HE SPOTS THE SNARLING ENRAGED BEAST CROUCHING WITH HATE-FILLED EYES JUST A HAIRBREADTH AWAY...

THE LION!

KLEIGMAN... KLEIGMAN... WHERE THE DEVIL ARE YOU?

GROWWWRR

MY TRAINING MAY NOT SAVE YOU, CLEVE, BUT IT'LL IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES!

THE LION SEEMS TO BE DRUGGED... ACTING CRAZY... ITS COORDINATION IS OFF... JUST A LITTLE... JUST ENOUGH, I HOPE... I HOPE!

BUT HOW MUCH COORDINATION DOES A LION NEED TO WIPE OUT ONE **DEADMAN**?... HE'S GETTING READY TO CHARGE!

MOVE... MOVE UNDER AND AWAY FROM THOSE LASHING CLAWS... AGAIN AND AGAIN! ARGHH! CLAW GOT YOU... JUST A SCRATCH... DUCK AND RUN! LOOK FOR AN OPENING...

THERE'S ONE NOW!

F-FEEL L-LIKE I'M RIDING A VOLCANO! G-GOT TO HOLD ON... OR HE'LL RIP ME APART.'

HE'S TOO WILD... I CAN'T HOLD HIM!

THAT'S IT... DEAD-MAN... GET OUT OF RANGE OF THOSE RAKING CLAWS! BUT YOU CAN'T GO ANY HIGHER! HE'LL DRAG YOU DOWN ANY MOMENT...

ONE CHANCE... KARATE! GOT TO TRY IT!

ELROWWW

KRAK

HYAAAA!!

BRUTUS! YOU'VE HURT HIM, YOU MONSTER!

ROOOKK

BUT YOU DIDN'T HURT THE LION THAT MUCH, AND HE'S STILL IN A RAGE! DO SOME THING! BEFORE IT KILLS HER... THE GUN... THE GUN..

BLAM BLAM BLAM

THE SHOTS WERE HEARD AND HELP COMES! NOW AS THE NURSE IS READY TO TAKE HER TO THE HOSPITAL, SHE MOTIONS FOR YOU TO COME CLOSER!

THE HOOK... GAVE ME THE DRUG TO GIVE TO THE CAT... PROMISED MONEY... WANTS YOU DEAD... DON'T KNOW WHY... KLEIGMAN ...HE... UHH...

PASSED OUT! I'M SURE SHE WAS GOING TO TELL ME THAT KLEIGMAN IS "THE HOOK"! GOTTA FIND HIM... NOW!

I'LL LEAVE MY BROTHER CLEVE, TO GET PATCHED UP FOR THE BIG PARADE... SEE IF I CAN DIG UP KLEIGMAN!

A SHORT TIME LATER WHILE YOU SEARCH FOR KLEIGMAN, THE BIG TENT TREATS THE ASSEMBLED MULTITUDE TO THE SIGHT OF THE DELIGHTFUL, FANTASY-FILLED PARADE, UNIQUE TO THE BIG TOP...

THERE, ON A FLOAT, RIDES YOUR LOOK ALIKE, DEADMAN! STRAIGHT AND TALL! A PERFECT TARGET! HE SCANS THE CROWD SEARCHING FOR...

HOOK... THERE HE IS!

WHILE YOU'RE AT THE OTHER END OF THE TENT, DEADMAN, YOU MISS SOMETHING...

YOU MISS SEEING THE MAN WHO TOOK YOUR PLACE NOW CHASING YOUR KILLER! HE'S GOING TO CATCH HIM, DEADMAN... HE'S GETTING CLOSER... CLOSER...

KLEIGMAN!!

SPROST

GET AWAY FROM ME! GET AWAY OR I'LL...

UNGHHH!

YOU'LL DO NOTHING, YOU TWO-BIT ASSASSIN! BOSTON BRAND IS DEAD AND *YOU* KILLED HIM!

I WANT TO KNOW WHY! TELL ME! *TELL ME!*

ALL RIGHT, HOOK, TALK! AND TALK FAST! I'M NOT ABOVE WORKING YOU OVER BEFORE THE COPS GET HERE! *TALK!*

I'M NOT THE HOOK... I SWEAR IT! I NEVER EVEN WORE ONE OF THESE THINGS BEFORE TODAY!

YOU GOTTA BELIEVE ME... I SWEAR IT'S THE TRUTH! *I SWEAR!*

BUT WHY? WHAT FOR? HE MUST HAVE WANTED ME TO CHASE YOU AND HE MUST HAVE TOLD YOU *WHY!*

LOOK! LOOK! IT'S JUST TIED ON! IT WAS THE HOOK THAT HIRED ME TO MIX WITH THE CROWD AND FLASH THIS PHONY HOOK!

WHY? THE QUESTION RINGS OUT AND DRIFTS ACROSS THE FIELD AND IS HEARD BY THE MAN WITH THE RIFLE! AND AS IF ON CUE, HE PLAYS THE PART HIS TERRIBLE DESTINY HAS WRITTEN FOR HIM...

KRAK KRAK

THOSE SHOTS CAME FROM OUT THE...

HEY, THERE'S TWO GUYS OUT THERE...

YOU'VE HEARD THE COMMOTION... AND NOW YOU STREAK TO THE SCENE, BUT THE NEED FOR SPEED NO LONGER EXISTS, DEADMAN!

HE'S NOT BREATHING! TAKE OFF HIS MASK... QUICKLY!

MY BROTHER, NO!! CLEVE!

YES'M!

IT'S TINY!! HE TOOK CLEVE'S PLACE!

OOHHH... YEAH, HE SLUGGED ME... MUST'VE TAKEN COSTUME... MASK...

AND NOW HE'S DEAD... OH, TINY, YOU GREAT-HEARTED FOOL!

D
RGGGH
AKK
D